

**LADY BIRD JOHNSON MIDDLE SCHOOL  
BAND HANDBOOK  
2016-2017**

Welcome to the Johnson Band! We are very glad to have you as a part of the band program at Johnson. Just think of the fun we will have playing concerts, going to contests, and meeting new friends. Of course, the students will have fun too!

If you have never had a child in band at Johnson, this document will serve as a guide throughout the year. **Please keep this information available for reference all year** and *understand that some dates, times or events may change*. Some first time band parents are unfamiliar with band activities, jargon, and the expectations of band students. We hope that the information provided will help answer some of your questions.

**BAND DIRECTORS**

Adam Schmitz, Band Director  
Donald Jackson, Associate Director

**CONFERENCE PERIOD**

10:55 – 11:40 a.m.  
10:55 – 11:40 a.m.

Mr. Schmitz directs the Varsity Band, assists the Non-Varsity Band, and teaches Beginner Band classes.  
[aschmitz@irvingisd.net](mailto:aschmitz@irvingisd.net)

Mr. Jackson directs the Non-Varsity Band, assists with the Varsity Band, and teaches Beginner Band classes.  
[dojackson@irvingisd.net](mailto:dojackson@irvingisd.net)

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

The phone number to the Johnson Band Hall is: 972-600-0545.

As band directors, we have a responsibility to teach hundreds of students throughout each day; therefore, our primary method of communication is email. So that we have your current email address, please visit the Johnson Band “Charms” site. To register into the “Charms” system please see the document at the end of this handbook. Charms also serves as our band web site so it is important for you to register with “Charms”.

We also use the Remind notification system

All Band Parents: Text @johnsonmsb to 81010  
Practice Record Reminder: Text @johnsonpr to 81010  
Varsity Band: Text @johnsonvar to 81010  
Non-Varsity Band: Text @johnsonnv to 81010  
Beginning Woodwinds: Text @johnsonbww to 81010  
Beginning Brass: Text @johnsonbb to 81010  
Beginning Percussion: Text @johnsonbp to 81010

You should sign up for the All Band, the Practice Record Reminder, then your specific class as well.

If you wish to have a conference with a director, please call ahead to set up a date/time, as a teacher may not stop a class or sectional for a conference.

The band hall opens at 7:15 a.m.

Students may practice after school until 4:45 p.m., provided space is available.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Johnson Middle School Band is a fun, challenging and positive experience in which students develop mental, physical, social and musical skills that will last a lifetime.

## **VISION**

The band program will teach continuous development, improvement and refinement of fundamental performance skills. Every rehearsal or performance of any kind will be of the highest quality. Every member of the band bears equal responsibility to be present, punctual, prepared and positive. Each student will demonstrate an effort to achieve the goals set forth by the director in each rehearsal or performance. The following traits – fun, challenging, positive- will be not only words associated with your Johnson Band experience but also carried on into every aspect of each member's life. Competition will be an integral part of the band program, but only a part. Through competition, individual performance should reach a higher level than might be achieved without the challenge of a competitor. Success will be determined by improvement rather than ranking. If each competitor's performance improves as a result of the competition, then everyone involved actually contributes to the success of those who are judged "best", and should share in the celebration. In this manner, every participant "wins" and receives benefit from the event. If competitors seek to win at any cost, then there can be only one "winner", and everyone involved runs the risk of becoming a "loser". This concept of one victor and many victims is destructive to the learning process and is to be avoided in the Johnson Band.

The guidelines listed in this manual are subject to review and the directors may make amendments at any time throughout the year. It is the intention of the directors in every decision to be consistent and fair to all concerned. Each circumstance is different and situations will be handled individually between the student, director, and parents. As long as fun, challenging, positive are involved in every decision the result will always be rewarding for all involved.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

As directors of the Johnson Band, we expect sincere effort. Rehearsal schedules are posted well in advance and streamlined as much as possible. We do not rehearse for the sake of just having rehearsal. We rehearse for the purpose of improvement. The band is a large team that cannot advance if all members are not present and extending effort. Unavoidable absences will occur but are to be limited if at all possible. Scheduled absences (appointments) are to be avoided during stated rehearsal times to help the group move forward. Students involved in other activities are responsible for communicating their schedule conflicts to sponsors of both activities in advance to reduce conflicts with both activities. The directors will make every effort to be fair to all parties involved and consistent in judgment in regards to consequences for missing rehearsals. We want band to be rewarding for all involved and will keep this goal in mind with every decision.

Band members will be expected to be exemplary students at all times in all classes. Academic performance, citizenship, attitude and behavior are included in this expectation. We must meet this goal in order to establish the status and credibility necessary for school-wide support (pride) of the band. The band will develop an expectation of its members to insure and maintain academic eligibility. Being challenged by course work is normal. Failing grades are usually a result of not looking ahead (don't get behind) or not taking appropriate corrective action, rather than an inability. There will be many resources within the band to help students through difficult situations, but the responsibility is on the students in need to ask for help.

## **BEGINNER BAND**

The beginning band classes are for all students who have not yet been in a school band. No musical background is necessary. Beginning band students meet daily during one of several class periods. The uniform for the Winter Recital, February Concert and Spring Concert is khaki (pants) and their band shirt.

### **BEGINNER BAND EXPECTATIONS:**

- Students will bring their instrument, all music, and a pencil to class every day.
- Students will have the necessary supplies to play their instrument, such as reeds (for clarinet, saxophone, oboe and bassoon), the mouthpiece, and all the parts needed to play.
- Students will keep their instruments in working condition. Brass instruments will oil valves and grease slides at home.
- Students will have their practice card filled out every day and signed by a parent to be turned in every Monday.
- Students will practice a reasonable amount each week.
- Students will attend all full band rehearsals for their class.
- Students will attend and participate in all required performances.

### **Grading System:**

- 40% Minor Grades (practice records & participation)
- 60% Major Grades (playing tests & class concerts)

## **PERFORMING BANDS**

### **(VARSITY AND NON-VARSITY BANDS)**

These bands are made up of students who have had one or more years of experience on their instrument.

### **NON-VARSITY BAND EXPECTATIONS:**

- Students will bring their instrument, all music, and a pencil to class.
- Students will have the necessary supplies to play their instrument, such as reeds (for clarinet, saxophone, oboe and bassoon), the mouthpiece, and all the parts needed to play their instrument.
- Students will keep their instruments in working condition. Brass instruments will oil valves and grease slides at home.
- Students will have their practice card filled out every day and signed by a parent to be turned in every Monday.
- Students will practice a reasonable amount each week.
- Students will have the correct clothes to fit the uniform at all required performances.
- Students will attend and participate in all required performances.
- Select Students will audition for All City Band and All Region Band.
- Students will participate in Pre-UIL Concert & Sight Reading Irving District Assessment
- Students will participate in UIL Concert & Sight Reading Contest
- Students will participate in a Spring Contest Festival trip
- Students will participate in an ensemble in the IISD Solo and Ensemble contest.
- Students will attend all section rehearsals for their band.

### **Grading System:**

- 40% Minor Grades (practice record & participation)
- 60% Major Grades (class concerts & in-class/sectional performance grades)

## **PERFORMING BANDS CONTINUED**

### **VARSITY BAND EXPECTATIONS:**

- Students will bring their instrument, all music, and a pencil to class.
- Students will have the necessary supplies to play their instrument, such as reeds (for clarinet, saxophone, oboe and bassoon), the mouthpiece, and all the parts needed to play their instrument.
- Students will keep their instruments in working condition. Brass instruments will oil valves and grease slides at home.
- Students will have their practice card filled out every day and signed by a parent to be turned in every Monday.
- Students will practice a reasonable amount each week. The total time will depend on the difficulty of the music they need to learn. Students must practice enough to learn all the material given to them.
- Students will have the correct clothes to fit the uniform at all required performances.
- Students will behave better than any other students in the band program.
- Students will attend and participate in all required performances.
- Students will audition for All City Band and All Region Band.
- Students will participate in Pre-UIL Concert & Sight Reading Irving District Assessment
- Students will participate in UIL Concert & Sight Reading Contest
- Students will participate in a Spring Contest Festival trip
- Students will participate in an ensemble in the IISD Solo and Ensemble contest.
- Students will attend all section rehearsals for their band.

### **Grading System:**

- 40% Minor Grades (practice record & participation)
- 60% Major Grades (class concerts & in-class/sectional performance grades)

## **CONCERTS AND CONTESTS**

Attendance is required at all concerts and contests. Absence from one of these events may result in reduction of the student's grade. Students who miss concerts/contests or who receive disciplinary consequences (ISS/suspension) for actions at school may not attend any scheduled spring band trips, unless the absence is excused by the band director. Excused absences are limited to sickness (doctor's note required) and death in the immediate family. In either case, the student must make up the time missed by attending additional practices in order to make up the time.

NOTE: If the Johnson Band purchases tickets (including, but not limited to, amusement park tickets) on behalf of the parent and the child is not able to participate in the event for any reason, including school disciplinary reasons, no refund will be given. Every effort will be made to get the ticket to the student.

## **PRACTICE AND COMMITMENT**

Playing in the band requires outside practice time. For beginning students, we request 15-20 minutes per day for the first month, then increasing to 30-45 minutes per day. Practice is more effective when done in several short segments rather than all at once.

\*Remember: Practice does not make perfect all the time. Practice makes permanent. Perfect practice makes perfect. Encourage your student to use good habits when practicing.

All band students will be graded on their practice card. Students in performing bands are expected to attend weekly sectionals. Percussion students are encouraged to practice at school as much as possible since all grades will be taken on full-size instruments.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Most of the work that our students do is either curricular or co-curricular and not subject to eligibility laws. Curricular and co-curricular activities are free concerts, sectional rehearsals, concert rehearsals, and private lessons.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities must meet T.E.A. (Texas Education Association) and U.I.L. (University Interscholastic League) eligibility requirements. Students who fail any single class at the end of a six-week period will become **ineligible** seven days later. Ineligible students do not regain eligibility immediately. They must wait or seven calendar days after the end of the grading period. Students may regain eligibility seven calendar days after the end of the three-week grade evaluation period provided the principal and teachers have determined the student is passing all courses. Semester grades are never used for eligibility.

Activities that are classified as extracurricular for which T.E.A, U.I.L. and I.I.S.D. eligibility requirements apply include:

1. Any event for which admission is charged.
2. Any event that is inter-school competitive.
3. Any event where ratings are awarded.

Should a band student become ineligible for an extracurricular function, he or she will still be eligible for curricular and co-curricular functions. Ineligible students will be given alternate assignments during contest preparation time.

## **EXPECTED REHEARSALS**

Students in the Varsity and Non-Varsity will have one before/after school rehearsal each week. These rehearsals are called "sectionals." This rehearsal will either be from 7:30-8:10 a.m. or 4:00-4:45 p.m. Attendance is expected and is very important for the individual students as well as the entire section. We will take grades in sectionals in order to maximize group time during class. See *SECTIONAL GUIDELINES*.

## **SECTIONAL GUIDELINES**

Sectionals are a very important part of the success of the Johnson band. Sectionals are a required activity and student attendance is expected by the school district. Students in band receive a grade for sectional attendance. You, the parent, and Irving ISD have invested a great deal of money in your child's music education. Band is a group effort and is only as successful as the weakest member. Therefore, participation at all activities and sectionals is important. Students in band have a limited amount of after school rehearsal time. This allows students to be involved in a variety of sports and activities. If you choose to be involved in an extra activity, communication of conflicts is crucial. Listed below are reasons for excused absences and examples of unexcused absences.

**Excused** (Please inform your band director before any missed sectional of a scheduling conflict. Any missed sectionals must be made up during another schedule sectional time. Discuss with your band director on when to make up the missed sectional.)

- Tutorials: Students are given several opportunities each week for tutorials. This allows a band student to attend a tutorial that does not conflict with a sectional. Please do your best to avoid conflicts with sectionals and tutorials.
- UIL: Any UIL activity is an excused absence.
- UIL Athletics practice: Athletic practice is coordinated with coaches and band directors.
- Family emergency: Must have a parent or doctor's note.

## **SECTIONAL GUIDELINES CONTINUED**

### **Unexcused**

- Clubs: If there is an extenuating circumstance involving a performance, discuss it with your band director and get a sponsor's signature.
- Sports Outside of School: Non-school related sports (clubs/little league) are not excused unless permission is requested in advance and approved.

Lack of communication is the reason for most unexcused absences from sectionals. Students who keep up with their school schedule and communicate known conflicts to parents and teachers are able to avoid unexcused absences.

### **PERFORMANCES/CONTEST PARTICIPATION**

The Johnson Bands will perform several times a year. We will have a Fall Concert in October, Winter Concert in December, a Mid-Winter Concert in February and a Spring Concert in May. In April and May, the bands will participate in several contests as a group. In addition, these students will participate in individual competitions earlier in the school year. The following are competitions in which 7th and 8th grade students will participate:

**IISD All City Band Audition** is an individual "All-Star" competition where our students compete with other students from our school district. Varsity Band members are expected to participate in this event. Non-Varsity members are also encouraged to participate.

**All-Region Band Audition** is another individual "All-Star" competition. Varsity Band members are expected to participate in this event. Non-Varsity members are also encouraged to participate.

**NOTE:** Audition music for IISD All City Band and All-Region Band is all the same. Students will be asked to play prepared music and scales. Students will audition behind a screen for a panel of judges. Students will be ranked based on their auditions. Those selected for these prestigious groups will have rehearsals and a concert.

**IISD Solo and Ensemble Contest** is not a competition but rather an evaluation of prepared music. Band members will participate by learning small ensembles with two or more students. In addition, students may play a piece by themselves, called a solo, in this competition. Entry fees will be announced prior to participation. Students will receive music approximately December 1.

**Pre-UIL and UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest** are full band contests where the Varsity and Non-Varsity bands will perform 3 prepared pieces of music and sight-read a piece of music they have never seen before. The bands will not be competing against other bands but for a rating. This is like the band's STAAR test for the year.

## **GENERAL RULES AND POLICIES**

Every student must behave appropriately for band class.

If our students are going to learn everything they need to learn in order to be successful, all students must cooperate by contributing to a positive classroom environment, free from discipline issues. Everyone has paid money to be in band class, and it is unacceptable for any student to inhibit another student's music education with disruptive behavior.

Every student must have their name clearly placed on their instrument case.

This policy prevents students from taking the wrong instrument home and allows the directors to easily identify which instrument belongs to which student for security reasons.

Every student needs to take their instrument home every day.

This policy keeps our students responsible for their instruments and eliminates students not practicing because they don't have their instrument at home. The directors stay until 5:00 pm Monday through Thursday, but leave earlier on Fridays. Students involved in athletic games or other activities that make it difficult to get their instrument are expected to make plans to get their instrument home.

Every student needs to take care of their own instrument.

This policy is for security reasons. Friends are not allowed to get your instrument out of the band hall for you, and you should not touch anyone's instrument except your own.

Students who are not in band are not allowed in the band hall.

This policy is for security reasons.

Students who take their instrument into the repair shop must bring a note from a parent.

We want to know if your instrument is in need of repair. Sometimes, the directors can fix problems, so let us try first. If we cannot fix the problem, we will recommend that you take your instrument in for repair.

Only percussion students are allowed to touch or play percussion instruments.

This policy is to protect our instruments from being damaged. Our percussion instruments are owned by the school and several of them are very expensive. Disciplinary action may be taken.

There is no gum or food in the band hall & practice rooms.

We want to keep our band hall looking nice, proper care of instrument, and this policy helps us accomplish this goal.

Students who use the practice rooms are expected to leave them the way they found them.

The practice room equipment should not be moved to another room or rearranged on the cart. Do not change settings on the tuners – just use them.

Students are required to attend the following performances. Dates are on the band calendar.

**Beginning Band** – December Recital, February Concert, Spring Concert, Spring Contest

**All 7/8 grade Bands** – Fall Concert, Winter Concert, Mid-Winter Concert, IISD Solo and Ensemble Contest, IISD Pre-UIL Festival, UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest, additional Spring Festival, and the Spring Concert.

## **PRACTICE**

- ***Practice*** is one-part physical exertion and three parts self-discipline. Doing it is easy once you get started.
- ***Practice*** makes you better today than you were yesterday. It strengthens your body, relaxes your mind and toughens your spirit. When you practice regularly, your problems diminish and your confidence grows.
- ***Practice*** is a personal triumph over laziness and procrastination. It is the badge of a winner. It is the mark of a well-organized, goal-oriented person who has taken charge of his or her personal destiny.
- ***Practice*** is the wise use of time and is an investment in personal excellence. It is a way of proving to yourself that you have what it takes to accomplish that which you set out to do.
- ***Practice*** is the key that helps unlock the door to opportunity and success. Hidden within you is an extraordinary force. Practice is the trigger that releases it.

## **JOHNSON BAND UNIFORM**

All students will purchase a Johnson Band T-Shirt for informal performances

## **FORMAL UNIFORM**

(Varsity and Non-Varsity Bands for the Pre-UIL, UIL and Spring Concerts)

Gentlemen: White, long sleeve, button-down dress shirt.

Black dress pants - no jeans.

Black socks.

Black dress shoes - no tennis shoes or sandals.

Black Vest (school provided)

Ladies: Black Dress Formal (school owned)

Black Socks, or pantyhose (black or nude)

Black dress shoes/flats - no tennis shoes or sandals.

## **SOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

*We highly recommend that students keep their instruments in the band hall during the day.*

This policy is for your benefit. The directors are always either in the band hall, or the doors are locked. It is somewhat common to have students leave their instruments in other classes or in the hall if they carry it around all day. The band hall is the safest place for your instrument.

*We highly recommend that you write down the make, model and serial number of your instrument.*

This policy is to protect you in case something does happen to your instrument. You should write down the make, model and serial number of your instrument and keep it at home.

Make of instrument: \_\_\_\_\_ Model of instrument: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHARMS

Charms will be the location of all announcements/News, the origin of email communication, calendar. It will be the central hub of communication for the band. Please go onto CHARMS today, if you have not already done so, and make sure your contact information is correct. Here are the directions.

How to access parent/student information in

# CHARMS

- Log on to [www.charmsoffice.com](http://www.charmsoffice.com), and click the “ENTER/LOG IN” link at upper right.
- Locate the “PARENT/STUDENT/MEMBERS LOGIN” section of the web page.
- Login to your child’s program account using the following School Code:

## LBJMSBAND

- This will bring up the main parent page. This will allow you to look at the “public” calendar for your organization, event list, handouts and other files.
- Clicking on an event on the calendar brings up the details for that event, such as times, attendance requirements, volunteer opportunities, and other event details. Note that if a calendar event is specifically assigned to your child, it may NOT show up on this calendar – check the “Student” calendar after entering the student’s ID number (see below).
- When you enter your child’s ID NUMBER (provided by your Director) as a **Student Area Password**, another more detailed screen appears with even more options to view your student’s uniform assignments, music assignments, financial records, forms and inventory. Once you have first entered this ID number, you may create your own, unique password by clicking on the “lock” (**Change Password**) icon.
- One area in which you can help the director maintain his/her records:
  - **Update Personal Information** – if the director has allowed it, you may help make changes to your child’s student information page (such as updating phone numbers and email addresses if they change) to help the teacher communicate with you more effectively. Click the **Personal Info** button.
- You will also see links to enter **Practice Logs**, view **Grades**, and use the **Recording Studio** if the teacher has enabled these options.
- Most importantly, the parent page assists both you and the teacher to communicate with each other. Stay up to date on what’s going on with your student!

# Johnson Middle School Band 2016-2017 Sign and Return Page

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's First Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student ID #

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City & Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Instrument

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brand of Instrument

\_\_\_\_\_  
Model Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Serial Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Father's/Guardian's First and Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Father's/Guardian's Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mother's/Guardian's First and Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mother's/Guardian's Email Address

**Please read the Johnson Middle School Band Handbook carefully, and sign below.**

“We have read, understand and agree to the policies and procedures outlined in the 2016-2017 Johnson Middle School Band Handbook and our student has permission to participate in band and all band activities within the guidelines as stated.”

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

“I have read, understand and agree to the policies and procedures outlines in the 2016-2017 Johnson Middle School Band Handbook. I realize that failure to follow policies or directions will result in disciplinary action that could lead to dismissal from the Band and Band Classes.”

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please return this page during as soon as possible.**